DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 463 434 CE 083 076

AUTHOR Allen, Pam; Pardue, Don
TITLE Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program Becomes Independent and Its Performance Improves. OPPAGA Status Report.
INSTITUTION Florida State Legislature, Tallahassee. Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.
REPORT NO OPPAGA-02-12
PUB DATE 2002-02-00
NOTE 10p.; For another report on Jobs for Florida's Graduates, see ED 437 559.
AVAILABLE FROM OPPAGA Report Production, Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 W. Madison St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475. Tel: 850-488-0021; Tel: 800-531-2477 (Toll Free); Fax: 850-487-3804; Web site: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/. For full text: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/pdf/0212rpt.pdf.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Counseling; *Education Work Relationship; Employment Services; Graduation; *High Risk Students; High Schools; Job Training; Mentors; *Potential Dropouts; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *Program Improvement; State Aid; State Legislation; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS Florida; Jobs for Americas Graduates

ABSTRACT

The Jobs for Florida's Graduates (JFG) program targets high school students and provides services to help these students graduate and to continue their education or find meaningful employment within one year of graduation. School managers and "job specialists" serve as mentors, identify at-risk high school students, and provide them with job counseling and training services. The 2001 Florida state legislature has made significant changes to the JFG program, aligning the program's performance measures with the national Jobs for America's Graduates program and severing program ties with state government. The program has generally met its performance goals in 2000-01 except for the statutory goal to operate in 300 schools. Graduation, job placement, and earnings goals have been met. The school program goal is unlikely to be met. During the 2001-02 school year, the program was not funded by the Legislature and has scaled back operations from 34 to 13 schools. School principals are generally satisfied with the program at their schools. The JFG program has been awarded standard accreditation by the national program. The future of the JFG program is unclear. It is currently operating with rollover funds that will be largely used by the end of the fiscal year. (YLB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 463 434

Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program Becomes Independent and Its Performance Improves

OPPAGA Status Report

Pam Allen and Don Pardue

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

K. Hutchinson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LEO X50076

CE

oppaga

Status Report

February 2002

Report No. 02-12

Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program Becomes Independent and Its Performance Improves

at a glance

- The program generally met its performance goals in 2000-01 except for the statutory goal to operate in 300 schools. The program currently operates in 13 schools. School principals were generally satisfied with the program at their schools.
- The 2001 Legislature made significant changes to the Jobs for Florida's Graduates program. It aligned the program's performance measures with the national program and severed program ties with state government.
- The Jobs for Florida's Graduates program reports performance measures specified in law following the prescribed methodology. However, this methodology calculates employment rates for the program using only program graduates who have positive outcomes. The calculation does not include students who did not graduate or who graduated, but were not employed full-time or enrolled in school, and thus overstates program success. Employment rates for all participants are calculated, but are not included in the Legislative measures.
- The future of the Jobs for Florida's Graduate's Program is unclear. It was not appropriated funding for the 2001-02 fiscal year and is currently operating with rollover funds that will be largely used by the end of the fiscal year.

Purpose

Section 446.609(10)(a), *Florida Statutes,* requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to review the annual report submitted by Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc., regarding the activities of the Jobs for Florida's Graduates program. Our review is to analyze reported program results and make any recommendations regarding the expansion, curtailment, modification, or continuation of the program.

Background

The Legislature created the Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program in 1998 to help students at-risk of dropping out of school make the transition from school to work. The program targets high school students and provides services to help these students graduate and to either continue their education or find meaningful employment within one year of graduation. Florida's program is part of a 20-year nationwide initiative coordinated by the Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc., based in Arlington, VA. This organization is currently working with high school students in 28 states.

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability
an office of the Florida Legislature

The Florida Endowment Foundation governs the program.[1] The board hires a management team and is also charged with encouraging public and private support and contributions to the program. The Jobs for Florida's Graduates management team is responsible for the program's day-to-day activities, including the training and supervision of staff that work in participating high schools, collecting data, and conducting site visits to the participating high schools.

Job specialists serve as mentors. School managers and "job specialists" identify at-risk high school students and provide to them a variety of job counseling and training services.[2] These job specialists work with 35-45 students in each participating high school.

Job Specialists are hired either by the program's board under independent contract or by school managers as school board employees under the program's standard memorandum of agreement.[3] The job specialists meet regularly with students to help them obtain specific job competencies. Much of this contact with students occurs in one-to-one mentoring sessions. However, the job specialists also interact with students after classroom hours, particularly during instructional meetings of the student-run Career Association, which comprises all students selected to the program. Job specialists are also expected to meet periodically with students and their parents.

The job specialists are required to market the program to prospective employers and work to place students in quality jobs. By law, job specialists have a 12-month period after the date of the students' anticipated high school graduation to conduct follow-up activities that help the students get employed, stay employed and advance in their jobs, or continue their education beyond high school while establishing a positive part-time work record.

Participating schools are selected by the foundation board and must enter into an agreement with the board that details the responsibilities of each party and the process and outcome goals for the program. The selected schools must be demographically and geographically representative of the state's population.

Legislative expectations increased during program's tenure. The Legislature has established specific outcome goals for the program. These include standards for student graduation rates, employment status, and earnings, with expectations increasing over program's initial five years. For example, 82% of Jobs for Florida's Graduates first year participants were expected to graduate or earn their General Equivalency Diploma (GED). This goal increased to 85% for Fiscal Year 1999-2000 and to 90% for subsequent years. The Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program also has a statutory goal to operate in at least 300 school sites.

While the Legislature appropriated $3 million annually to the program in prior years, the program was not funded for Fiscal Year 2001-02. The program was authorized to operate in Fiscal Year 2001-02 using investment earnings and carry over funds from prior years totaling $1,067,008. The program is operating 16 programs this fiscal year, compared to 34 programs in Fiscal Year 2000-01.

Although the program encourages the program to develop private contributions, the program did not obtain private contributions for the first two years of operation. The program budget lists a total of $50,000 in private grants and donations for the 2001–02 school year. Since July 2001, the program has increased its efforts to raise private funding and reports that the staff has written 21 grants/solicitations since that time. In addition, the board has formed a committee to develop a fundraising plan and to initiate a fundraising event in March of 2002.

---

[1] The board has 15 members representing the public and private sectors with a majority of members and the chair from the private sector.

[2] In 2000, OPPAGA recommended that the board examine the current statutory requirement that all job specialists must be program employees "to the maximum extent possible" rather than school district employees. In its examination, the board should consider the benefits and drawbacks of the requirement and whether it is feasible. The board should submit any needed changes to the policy to the Legislature for consideration during the 2001 session.

[3] Currently, there are 16 job specialists; 7 are under program board contract working in schools while the remaining 9 are school district employees.

2001 legislative changes to the program

The 2001 Legislature made significant changes to the Jobs for Florida's Graduate's program.[4] This law aligned the performance measures with the national program, removed all responsibility for the program from the Department of Education and deleted the requirement for the Auditor General to review the annual audit of the program--essentially severing program ties with state government. The law contains the provisions below:

- Established the Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program as a permanent program and eliminating its sunset date of July 2003.
- Expanded program eligibility to include charter schools and all at-risk students, rather than just at-risk twelfth grade students.
- Revised the board membership to require that a majority of the members be from the private sector, increased the number of authorized board members from 15 to *at least* 15; and changed board appointments from the Commissioner of Education to the current board members making new appointments.[5]
- Revised criteria for outcome goals and reporting requirements to bring statutory goals for the Florida program into alignment with those of the national Jobs for America's Graduates program.[6]
- Eliminated the Endowment Fund and transferred all of the funds in that account from the State Board of Administration to the Jobs for Florida Graduate's organization ($560,199.76).
- Eliminated the Florida Endowment Foundation for Florida's Graduates as a direct support organization of the Department of Education.
- Retained the requirement for an annual audit, but eliminated the requirement that the audit be submitted to the Auditor General for review.[7]

Findings

The program generally met its performance goals in 2000-01 except for the statutory goal to operate in 300 schools. The program currently operates in 13 schools. Florida's program has been awarded standard accreditation by the national program.

Graduation/job placement/earnings goals met; school program goal unlikely to be met

Graduation Rate. As shown in Exhibit 1, the program has met its goals for the percentage of participating students who graduate from their schools. For the class of 1999, 85.8% of the participating students graduated, which exceeded the program goal of 82%. For the class of 2000, 91.8% of the participating students graduated, which exceeded the goal of 85%. These figures include students who earned their General Equivalency Diploma (GED) within one year of leaving school. With follow up for a full year as part of the program, the graduation rate for the class of 2001 will not be known until June 2002.[8]

Employment. Program data also show that it has met its employment goals. Overall, 94.2% of the class of 2000 was employed 40 hours per week, in the military, or enrolled in postsecondary education, which exceeded the program's goal of 75-78%. As of October 2001, the employment rate for the graduates in the class of 2001 was 91.5%.[9]

---

[4] Chapter 2001-201, *Laws of Florida*.

[5] In 2000, OPPAGA recommended that the board review its membership to come into compliance with the statutory requirement that at least nine of its members hold positions in the private sector. By amending the statute to require a majority of the members be from the private sector instead of nine and by increasing the number of board members allowed from a maximum of 15 to *at least* 15 the board is more easily able to meet statutory goals.

[6] In 2000, OPPAGA recommended that the Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program report its performance consistent with statutory performance goals. By amending the statute to align the state program with the national program the state program is now aligned with the statutory goals.

[7] Chapter 2001-266, *Laws of Florida*.

[8] As of October 2001, the graduation rate for the class of 2001 was 79%. The graduation rate at this time last year was also 79%, so the program is on target to meet its goal of 90%.

[9] On November 1, 2000, the employment rate was 90.5%. The final employment rate for the class of 2000 was 94.1%. Based on this, the program is on target to meet its goal of 80% employed full time.

Exhibit 1
Based on the Program's Calculation Method, Graduation and Employment Rates Exceeded Goals in the First and Second Year

Graduation Rate			
Statutory Mandate	Calendar Year 1999 At least 82% graduated or completed GED	Calendar Year 2000 At least 85% graduated or completed GED	Calendar Year 2001 At least 90% graduated or completed GED
Program results	85.8%	91.8%	As of October 2001[1] 79%
Employment/Enrollment Rate			
Statutory Mandate	Calendar Year 1999 70-75% employed 40 hours per week, in the military, or enrolled in postsecondary institution	Calendar Year 2000 75-78% Employed 40 hours per week, in the military, or enrolled in postsecondary institution	Calendar Year 2001 80% Employed full time, in the military, or enrolled in postsecondary institution
Program results	92.7%	94.2%	As of October 2001[1] 91.5%
Programs in Operation			
	Calendar Year 1999 No fewer than 25 or more than 50 school sites	Calendar Year 2000 Working toward a goal of a minimum of 300 schools	Calendar Year 2001 Working toward a goal of a minimum of 300 schools
Program results	24 high schools	34 high schools	13 high Schools

[1] Final results will not be available until June 2002, after 12 months of follow-up activities have taken place.

Source: *Accreditation Report for Jobs for Florida's Graduates*, November 1, 2000, and *Accreditation Report for Jobs for Florida's Graduates*, November 1, 2001.

However, this measure should be interpreted with caution. Currently, the law requires the program to report its employment measure using the Jobs for America's Graduates' methodology which includes data only for those graduates who had positive outcomes; the measure excludes students who did not graduate or who graduated but were not employed full-time or enrolled in school. While this measure is consistent with the methodology used by the Jobs of America's Graduates program and the U.S. Department of Labor, it tends to inflate program success in the area of employment. If all program participants including non-graduates are included, the percentage employed full-time or enrolled in post-secondary education falls from 94% to 68% for the class of 2000. Jobs for Florida's Graduates does provide the number of students who did not graduate as part of their accreditation report. However, these students are not included when calculating the over all measure in this area. If the Legislature chooses to continue to fund Jobs for Florida's Graduates, the statute should be amended to include an additional measure of employment that provides information on employment for all participants in the Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program. This will enable the Legislature to assess program performance with more validity.

Long-term employment and earnings. The Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) conducts an annual longitudinal study of the program to compare program participants' employment and earnings to a representative control group with similar socioeconomic and educational backgrounds.[10] As shown in Exhibit 2, the EDR report, which tracked the class of 1999 program graduates for two years, found that a higher percentage of the program's graduates were employed, had full-time jobs, and earned more money than the control group. However, the report also noted that Jobs for Florida's Graduates participants were receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Grants (TANF) and/or Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and were incarcerated at a slightly higher rate than a control group and were subjected to community

[10] *Year 2 Report of the Longitudinal Study of the Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program*, http://www.state.fl.us/edr/Reports/jobs.pdf.

supervision at a substantially higher rate than the control group.

Earnings. The Jobs for Florida's Graduates program met its goal for the wage level of graduates in Fiscal Year 2001. Program graduates of the class of 2000 reported average earnings of $7.94 per hour, which is higher than the $6.58 per hour average wage level of national program graduates. As of October 2001, the average earnings for the class of 2001 are $7.65 per hour.

The 2001 EDR longitudinal study reported that students enrolled in the program earned slightly more than students who were not enrolled in the program. The report noted that two years after graduation, 32% of 1999 program graduates earned wages that exceeded $7.50 per hour, compared to 22% of the control group (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2
1999 Program Participants Were More Likely to Be Employed and Receive Higher Earnings

	Results for 2000		Results for 2001	
	Control Group	Program Class	Control Group	Program Class
Employed or in the Military	83%	89%	86%	91%
Estimated full-time	37%	42%	49%	51%
Earnings part-time (Qrtly=$2,678)	51%	51%	43%	40%
Wages between $5.15-$7.49	19%	19%	20%	18%
Wages between $7.50 and $8.99	6%	7%	9%	15%
Wages greater than $9.00	6%	11%	13%	18%
Receiving TANF and/or AFDC; Incarcerated; or Community Supervision	3%	4%	3%	8%

Source: OPPAGA Analysis of Office of Economic and Demographic Research *Year 2 Report of the Longitudinal Study of the Jobs for Florida's Graduates* program data.

Enrollment/School Openings. The program has not met the statutory goal to operate in 300 high schools and is currently operating in 13 schools. During the 2001-02 school year the program was not funded by the Legislature and has scaled back operations from 34 schools to 13 schools. Programs were selected to remain based on the performance of the job specialist for that program and the willingness of the job specialist to remain in the job. The job specialist's performance is based directly on the Jobs for America's Graduate's competencies.

The program's November 2001 annual report shows that there are 710 students, high school juniors, seniors and some adult education students currently enrolled in the program. This represents an average of 44 students per program, which meets the program goal of 35-45 students per program. The 2001 legislation also allowed the program to be expanded to students in grade levels other than the twelfth. This change allows students in grades other than twelve to participate in the program. However, in schools where the program is offered as an elective credit, students cannot remain in the class for more than one year because they cannot earn credits for a class twice.

Schools were generally pleased with the program

Principals we surveyed indicated that they were generally pleased with the Jobs for Florida's graduates program. We contacted principals in all 35 schools that have participated in the Jobs for Florida's Graduates program and 25 responded to our survey.[11] One-fourth (6) of those responding felt their programs had not been in existence long enough to evaluate. The remaining three-fourths (19) expressed satisfaction with the program and noted increased attendance, graduation, and post-program quality job attainment as reasons for their satisfaction.

Seventeen of the responding schools no longer participated in the program. Sixteen reported termination of program funding as the reason for cancellation while the seventeenth cited a district level decision as its reason for cancellation. Seventy percent (12) of these respondents reported they did not have a similar program to replace Jobs for Florida's Graduates. Schools indicating availability of similar programs cited programs such as Miami-Dade's Work Experience and Duval's Graduation Initiative as filling their need.

Program received accreditation. The Jobs for America's Graduates national program office awarded Florida's program Standard Accreditation status in 2001. Standard

[11] Since inception in Florida, a total of 35 schools have participated in the program of which 13 schools are currently participating.

Accreditation is the highest accreditation awarded by Jobs for America's Graduates.

Ties with state government severed as a result of the 2001 legislation

When the 2001 Legislature enacted legislation changing the Jobs for Florida's Graduate's program it essentially severed ties between the program and state government.[12] The Department of Education no longer has any authority over or responsibility for the program. Since there are no longer state funds appropriated for the program and the program is not operating in conjunction with any state agency the need for state level accountability has lessened. If state funding is not provided, there is no longer a need for OPPAGA and the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to continue to issue reports on the program on an annual basis.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The program generally met its performance goals in 2000-01 except for the statutory goal to operate in 300 schools. The program currently operates in 13 schools. School principals were generally satisfied with the program at their schools, and the program has been awarded Standard Accreditation status by the national program.

The program did not receive funding for the 2001-02 school year and is currently operating from unused carry-forward funds that will be largely used by the end of the school year. The program, however, could be strengthened.

- We recommend that if the Legislature funds the Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program, s. 446.609(7)(i), *Florida Statutes,* should be amended to require the program to annually report an additional employment outcome including *all* participants. This would be in addition to the current performance standard that uses the Jobs for America's Graduates' methodology as currently prescribed in statute.
- We recommend that the Jobs for Florida's Graduates' board aggressively pursue private donations and grants. Although the program encourages the development of private funding, none was obtained during the first three years of the program.

If the 2002 Legislature does not provide funding for the program, we recommend that it amend s. 446.609(10)(a), *Florida Statutes,* to eliminate the requirements that the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) review its annual report, and that s. 446.609(10)(b), *Florida Statutes,* be amended to eliminate the requirement for the longitudinal study of the program.

Agency Response

In accordance with the provisions of s. 11.51(5), *Florida Statutes,* a draft of our report was submitted to the Florida Endowment Foundation of the Jobs for Florida's Graduates program for their review and response.

The board's written response has been reproduced herein beginning on page 7.

[12] Chapters 2001-201 and 2001-266, *Laws of Florida.*

OPPAGA provides objective, independent, professional analyses of state policies and services to assist the Florida Legislature in decision making, to ensure government accountability, and to recommend the best use of public resources. This project was conducted in accordance with applicable evaluation standards. Copies of this report in print or alternate accessible format may be obtained by telephone (850/488-0021 or 800/531-2477), by FAX (850/487-3804), in person, or by mail (OPPAGA Report Production, Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 W. Madison St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475).

Florida Monitor: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/

Project conducted by Pam Allen (850/487-9250) and Don Pardue (850/487-9227)

Jane Fletcher, Staff Director (850/487-9255)

John W. Turcotte, OPPAGA Director

JAG
Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc

MEMORANDUM

CHAIR
The Honorable Marc Racicot

VICE CHAIR
Vacant

CHAIR
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Senator Thomas R. Carper

PRESIDENT
Kenneth M. Smith

TREASURER
Carolyn Warner

SECRETARY
Stephen G. Harrison

BOARD MEMBERS
Governor Lincoln Almond
Richard Baldridge
Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Linden S. Blue
Senator Christopher S. Bond
Commissioner Charles Crist
Michael D'Ambrose
David F. Demarest, Jr.
Rose M. DiNapoli
Thomas Donohue
Dennis Donovan
Julie Nixon Eisenhower
Joseph Griesedieck
John Hofmeister
House Speaker Larry Householder
Senator James M. Jeffords
Kevin Johnson
Lisa Keegan
Dr. William B. Keene
Governor Angus King
Governor Judy Martz
Patricia J. Matson
Superintendent Glenn "Max" McGee
Catherine B. McKee
The Honorable John R. McKernan, Jr.
Peter Mercer
Governor Ronnie Musgrove
Lawrence O'Toole
David Ohle
Governor Paul E. Patton
Kevin P. Pennington
General David Poythress
Superintendent Ed Richardson
The Honorable Charles S. Robb
Sharon Robinson
Allan Rowe
Governor George Ryan
Dr. Ted Sanders
Lt. Governor Mae Schunk
Governor Jeanne Shaheen
Richard A. Stoff
Gove mor Don Sundquist
Governor Bob Taft
Thomas J. Tauke
Superintendent Richard Thompson
Lisa Troutt
Commissioner Michael Thurmond
The Honorable Cecil Underwood
Governor Tom Vilsack
Senator George V. Voinovich

HEADQUARTERS
1729 King Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314-2720
(703) 684-9479
FAX: (703) 684-9489
e-mail:jag@md-net.com

FIELD SERVICES
5021 Morriss Road, Suite 111
Flower Mound, TX 75028
(972) 691-4486
FAX: (972) 874-0063
e-mail: jgk@cen-net.com

JAG WES SITE
http://www.jag.org

To: John W. Turcotte, OPPAGA Director

From: Jim Koeninger, Ph,D., Executive Vice President
Susan Shows, President, Jobs for Florida's Graduates

Cc: Governor Marc Racicot, JAG Board Chairman
Kenneth M. Smith, JAG President
Pam Allen, OPPAGA

Date: 02/14/02

Re: OPPAGA Status Draft Report Dated January 2002

We appreciated the headline for the OPPAGA Status Report—"Jobs for Florida's Graduates Program Becomes Independent and Performance Improves" and believe the majority of the report fairly represents Jobs for Florida's Graduates performance. We agree with the assessment that Jobs for Florida's Graduates:

- "...generally met its performance goals in 2000-01 except for the statutory goal to operate in 300 schools"
- "School principals were generally satisfied with the program at their school..."
- "...the program has been awarded Standard Accreditation' status by the national program (Jobs for America's Graduates)."

We are concerned, however, that the report states that Jobs for Florida's Graduates (as well as Jobs for America's Graduates) "overstates program success." House Bill 1901 (Chapter 98-218) prescribed that:

> "a school-to-work program to be known as Jobs for Florida's Graduates...be operated in accordance with the process and outcome standards of Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc. To that end, the board shall enter into a sponsoring agreement with Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc. to carry out the Jobs for America's Graduates model within the state."

JAG nor JFG should be faulted that House Bill 1901 is being implemented as passed by the Florida Legislature. JAG insists that Jobs for Florida's Graduates operate in the strict compliance to the "process and outcome standards of Jobs for America's Graduates." JAG conducts an annual accreditation of Jobs for Florida's Graduates as stipulated by House Bill 1901 and has awarded JFG Standard Accreditation as stated in the recent OPPAGA Status Report.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

JAG's process and outcome standards have been the focal point of the national organization and its affiliates since 1980, our founding year.

Given the Florida Legislature's stipulation that JFG should operate in accordance with JAG standards, we cannot respond positively to OPPAGA's recommendation that JAG change its procedures in preparing its annual accreditation report or outcome calculations.

OPPAGA Comment: *While we realize that statutes currently require Jobs for Florida's Graduates to use the national performance measure, we believe that the program should be required to report an additional measure—the employment outcome of all participants, including those that did not graduate. This would enable the Legislature to better assess program outcomes.*

The Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor Emily DeRocco sent a memo to the Chairman of the JAG Board of Directors, Governor Marc Racicot, that underscores JAG's process and outcome standards:

> "JAG has made an important contribution to the workforce investment system by providing critical services to disadvantaged youth. In preparing youth for the world of work by focusing on a strong educational foundation, you help assure long-term economic success for JAG participants and help develop the workforce of the future.
>
> As impressive are the outcomes that have been achieved by JAG. A vast majority of your participants gain a high school diploma or GED and enroll in further education or obtain a job. As we begin to discuss Workforce Investment Act reauthorization, models of success will need to be highlighted. The ultimate value of the publicly-funded workforce investment system will be measured on the outcomes achieved during both times of economic decline and periods of economic growth—outcomes like the ones that JAG has shown.
>
> We look forward to a continued relationship with JAG, and we commend you on your efforts and results. Keep up the good work."

We appreciated the opportunity to review the draft of the OPPAGA Status Report and request that a copy of this memorandum be attached to the final report unless OPPAGA's recommendation is withdrawn.

Please know our commitment to House Bill 1901 and to our high performing state affiliate--Jobs for Florida's Graduates.